

CASE STUDIES

Factory No. 1

1 Background of Firm

This is a paper mill employing 100 persons, part of a large group. It can draw on the advice of the group. The group encourages safe working and the Board give safety high priority, but the policy of the management in each individual factory ultimately determines whether safety is accorded its proper place. In this factory the safety policy is effective because it is the management's policy—safety receives wholehearted support from the management and, most important, safety is pushed by the almost aggressively active support of the Safety Officer who is endowed with a cheerful, thoroughly down-to-earth disposition.

This is a very old paper mill with antiquated machinery and poor buildings set on different levels and congested, yet the firm's accident rate is substantially lower than the accident rate for other factories in the group (modern factories). Last year this factory won the group's Safety Trophy.

The safety committee at the factory has been in existence for about eight years.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The Works Manager is the chairman, the Safety Officer is the secretary. The senior supervisor from each department is a member of the committee automatically and one shop floor employee from each department is also elected by fellow employees to serve on the committee. There is no rotation of committee members although in the normal course of events there are of course occasional changes. The committee meets every month regularly. There are no *ad hoc* meetings—special matters of safety which may arise suddenly and urgently are expected to be dealt with by the foremen or manager supervisor on the spot in accordance with the management's policy that safety has an important place in work. There is no question of waiting until the next meeting of the safety committee.

The energetic Safety Officer is a key figure in the effectiveness of the committee. He keeps the Minutes, pursues management, foremen and employees during the month, and chases the Maintenance Engineer to get the jobs done. Where the safety committee agrees on a course of action, the Safety Officer initiates the necessary work by directing an order stamped "safety" to the persons concerned (copy to Works Manager). Progress on each safety order is checked at the monthly meeting of the safety committee. The Safety Officer himself chases lagging safety orders during the course of the month and because of his personality and, most important, because the Works Manager attaches the same importance to safety orders as the Safety Officer himself does, they are attended to.

3 Training

Much time is spent on supervisor training in safety.

4 Machinery for Communication

Workpeople approach the foremen and the Safety Officer with their suggestions, and there are quite substantial monetary awards to foremen who maintain accident free departments. Where a department has an accident, the foreman loses his accident bonus and there is a waiting period before the bonus again becomes payable, increasing to maximum but immediately stopped when

another accident occurs. Each foreman has a strong personal interest, therefore, in safe working.

The committee considers all accidents as they occur, together with all near misses or potential accident producing situations which foremen and workpeople alike are encouraged to note in suggestion boxes, or direct to the Safety Officer. Much attention is paid to these so called "dangerous occurrences", which are required to be reported irrespective of anybody being injured. If anybody is hurt full details of the accident, who was involved, etc. are pinned up on that department's notice board.

5 Functions of the Works Safety Committee

In practice, methods of handling, maintenance of floors and equipment are the subjects most frequently on the committee's agenda. There have been no spectacular items of business but the result as a whole is reflected in the firm's accident rate. The raising of trivial matters is not a problem—it is expected that these should be dealt with on the spot, in accordance with the management's safety policy and would only appear on the committee's agenda if for some reason someone had failed to deal with such a matter. Statistics are kept of all accidents and "dangerous occurrences" and statistical information is used to promote safe working.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievement

Special emphasis is placed by the Safety Officer on keeping workpeople informed of the result of complaints and suggestions that they have made, and if any action has not been taken, the reasons why not. The Safety Officer also places emphasis on keeping foremen in the picture where an employee raises some point.

The Safety Officer constantly exhorts workpeople to make their own important contributions towards their own safety—wearing of eye protection, wearing safety shoes, observing the firm's rules about locking off equipment before working on it. There was a case not long ago where the firm's rules as to isolating machinery had not been followed, so that a van was sent to collect one employee from his home at four o'clock on a Sunday morning, so that he could bring his key to unlock a locked off valve that he had neglected to unlock.

The achievement of the committee is shown particularly in:

- (a) the interest in safety shown by workpeople throughout the factory,
- (b) the low accident rate in an old and not very suitable building.

Factory No. 2

1 Background of Firm

The report relates to a comparatively small chemical process factory, being one of about four plants operated by the company. The factory was constructed in 1940 and employs a total of 85, of whom 70 are industrial workers. The numbers employed have fluctuated very little over the years and there is consequently a low labour turnover with a preponderance of long service employees.

As regards the firm's safety policy, the nature of the product and materials used makes the consideration and implementation of safety precautions and procedures of paramount importance, and to this end no expense or trouble is spared to achieve safe conditions. The Works Manager (a qualified chemist) is himself the works Safety Officer and personally supervises the safety procedures operated by the firm. Virtually all maintenance and repair work is carried

out on a "Permit to Work" basis, these permits being standardised throughout the firm's various factories. The firm's main factory apparently has a section devoted entirely to the consideration and implementation of safety precautions, including the provision and overhaul of safety equipment such as breathing apparatus, etc. for all the firm's factories.

In addition, a group safety officer and inspection team inspects all the firm's factories periodically and runs a "safety audit" on plant, management, workers and safety equipment.

It is therefore fair to say that the management's attitude to safety is exemplary, this being substantiated by the firm's extremely low accident record.

All injuries arising from accidents decreased from 248 in 1962 to 102 in 1966 and only one or two in each year were serious enough to become lost-time accidents. Over this period there had been a gradual reduction in hours of exposure to risk, but the 1962-1966 decrease in hours (22 per cent) was much smaller than the reduction in all accidents (59 per cent).

The safety committee is a sub-committee of the works council which was formed when the factory commenced operation in 1940.

2 Composition of the Works Safety Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The committee is nine strong and is composed of four management and four workers' representatives, and the factory Senior Safety Attendant. There is no limitation imposed on the number of terms which the workers' representatives can serve, this being determined entirely by the results of ballots. The foremen on the management side are, however, rotated so as to serve one year in every four. The committee meets every three months.

In order to investigate all lost-time accidents and abnormal occurrences a "court of inquiry" is convened which whilst not being identical with the safety committee, is sufficiently similar to be classed as an *ad hoc* meeting. This court of inquiry meets after the Works Manager in his capacity as Safety Officer has conducted his own investigation, and he then reports to the court of inquiry on his findings.

3 Training

No formal training is given to committee members, but the Senior Safety Attendant expressed the opinion that merely serving on the committee made a vast difference to the workers' representatives' approach to, and appreciation of safety hazards, and as such might be considered to be a form of safety training.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

The proceedings and Minutes of all committee meetings are circulated to management and are posted on various works notice boards for the information of all employees. All instructions or modifications to working procedure arising from committee meetings are notified by the Works Manager as part of his normal executive powers to the relevant departments.

5 Functions of the Committee

There are no separate terms of reference but there are implied terms contained in the book of works rules issued to each employee:

The function of the works council (of which the safety committee is a sub-committee) is . . . "To assist in the effective day to day operation of the company's policy", this in turn being defined as . . . "Safe and efficient manufacture

coupled with a clear definition of responsibility providing an organisation for safe working". There is a further quote from the rule book . . . "The Company aims at the elimination of all accidents".

The committee's agenda has a fairly standard format, the principal items of which are:

- (1) An accident review (usually of minor accidents only) in which accident statistics are examined and discussed critically to ascertain any changes of pattern or new trends. This is usually assisted by a previously prepared tabulated analysis.
- (2) A discussion of the results of the "safety tour". This safety tour is a joint inspection of a random section of the factory by the Senior Safety Attendant and one of the four workers' representatives. This inspection is made immediately prior to the committee meeting, to which a report of any defects found is then made. This is of great value in teaching workers to look at things in a critical manner.
- (3) The Works Manager in his capacity as chairman addresses the meeting on a topical subject, which is then freely discussed—types of safety shoes, over familiarity with the product.

Committee members have no special authority invested in them purely by virtue of their being on the committee. All executive action is through the normal management channels, but members are nevertheless expected to advise and assist management in every way possible in the safe running of the factory, including advising their fellow workmen of safe working practices.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievement

It is apparent from the very low accident rate at this factory, which deals with potentially very hazardous products and materials, that the combined effect of the efforts of both management, through their executive functions and of the committee, through their advisory function, is to achieve a very high standard of safety. This is evidenced by the fall in the total number of accidents over the last five years. It is difficult to say to what extent this is due to the efforts of the joint committee but it is clear that this committee does contribute in no small measure to these safety standards, principally by engendering a feeling of mutual co-operation between management and workers, but also from the results of the safety tours and of greater safety awareness derived from committee membership.

Opinion of Management

The Works Manager, who is also the Safety Officer and committee chairman, thought that the committee probably had only a limited effect on the accident rate but was a very useful consultative body. He said that it had to be pressurised and primed by management, and emphasised that the management function on safety matters must be maintained at a high level in spite of the presence of a safety committee.

Opinion of Workers

The workers expressed a similar opinion to that of the Safety Supervisor, i.e. the mere fact of serving on the committee helped to induce a greater awareness of safety matters on the shop floor.

Factory No. 3

1 Background of Firm

This is a branch factory of a group, where about 700 persons are employed in making a specialised type of glass. The factory has been established for about 10 years. The company have a declared safety policy. They recognise room for considerable improvement in the accident rate and state that they refuse to accept accidents as the price of mechanisation and increasing production. The Managing Director has remarked "that the company's business is to produce glass but not glass with blood on it". A minimum safety programme is drawn up; each works must meet this target.

There is a comprehensive safety organisation. Top of the tree is a director. There is a group safety department (the group Safety Officer's status is equivalent to general manager in any of the individual companies) which co-ordinates safety policy. There are individual Safety Officers appointed at each factory and a main safety committee which is managerial in constitution plus departmental safety committees of joint constitution. Of paramount importance, however, the ultimate responsibility for safety is laid squarely at the door of each works manager. There is a positive attempt to make the safety function an inbuilt part of production. There has been a safety committee in the works since it started, but until four years ago it was more concerned with welfare. It has been re-constituted on *bona fide* safety principles and the committees have been growing in strength since.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

Management Committee:

Chairman—Works Manager.

Members—Senior managers including maintenance.

Secretary—Works Safety Officer.

Departmental Committees:

Chairman—Appointed by Works Manager, usually the Department Manager.

Members—Up to maximum four line management including foremen.

Up to maximum four shop floor representatives.

Secretary—Either Works Safety Officer or rotated amongst management representatives.

The workers' representatives are selected on a rota basis by works management. The Safety Officer not only acts as secretary but also gives advice where needed and tries to co-ordinate policy between the departments. The committee meets monthly, and although no *ad hoc* meetings have yet been called, they might be if the circumstances warranted. Sub-committees are appointed to look into specific accidents, occurrences and near misses, and report to the main committees.

3 Training

Foremen attend a three-day safety course. Management also have instruction training in safety. Safety training is given to each departmental committee as an item on each month's agenda. The training is organised by the safety department at factory and group level. Shop stewards also attend a safety course.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Committee Meetings

Line management and foremen are directly involved in the committee and receive copies of Minutes. The outcome of committee meetings is also covered

by the distribution of Minutes to members, posting Minutes on departmental notice boards, and by word of mouth from shop floor members of the committee.

5 Functions of the Committee

The study of statistical information is done by the group safety department on a broad basis and results circulated back to individual factories. At group, they have recently had access to a computer and ambitious programmes of statistical investigations are planned. Staff members naturally exercise management functions which come into play over committee business and they are inevitably influenced by what is decided at the committee. Shop floor members have no executive function by virtue of their office but they are approached by their mates and act as spokesmen if any point arises. Self-inspection surveys are carried out by the committees.

The most successful aspect of committee work has been the indoctrination of safety into everyday works activity. Safety matters are now dealt with effectively and enthusiastically in the department without recourse to the Safety Officer. Eye protection zones, wearing of eye protection and respirators in load risk zones have been very effectively pushed home by committees.

The departmental committees' functions are "advisory" but if any resistance is encountered the point can be taken directly to main committee for a decision. Furthermore there is a direct line of communication from the works Safety Officer to group. This is very frequently used for consultation and advice. Theoretically the works Safety Officer could by-pass senior works management if there were a major point of dispute on essential safety matters, but no such resistance has ever been encountered.

6 Comments on the Committees' Achievements

The statistics gathered at group level indicate a definite decline over the last three years in the percentage of accidents compared with numbers employed. It seems clear that there has been a definite growth in the awareness of safety in the factory over the last few years and that the safety committees and their work are part and parcel of this awareness. The setting up of a minimum safety programme with tangible safety targets each year has helped to take the committees past the "propaganda" stage and into the realm of real achievements. The management (Chairman and Safety Officer in particular), union, and workers are all agreed that the committees are effective and are satisfied with their running but they recognise there is still room for improvement and new ideas. With this openness of mind the organisation will improve and gather more strength on the way.

Factory No. 4

1 Background of Firm

The firm is a subsidiary for the manufacture of wood pulp from hard woods for the subsequent production of paper. The number of employees in the process is approximately 170. Although the firm has from the beginning been part of a large group, there has been complete local direction in accident prevention policy. Advice and help is, however, received from safety advisers within the group and also from the safety committee of the Employers' Federation of Paper Makers and Board Makers.

The management has adopted a progressive attitude to accident prevention and has actively sought the assistance of the employees. The Works Engineer is the Safety Officer and has the full and active support of the Works Manager, who, in turn, controls all matters at the premises (constructed in 1958). Accident frequency rates have, in general, decreased progressively since operations started at the factory reaching the lowest figure in 1966. In that year the figure was 0.29, the best in the area.

The firm has actively supported the matter of accident prevention, and has undertaken considerable expenditure to promote propaganda, to provide protective clothing and medical equipment and also to sponsor various incentive schemes with monetary awards. A works accident prevention committee was started when the firm began operations in 1958. Until 1962, it was a sub-committee of the works joint council, and in that year it was reorganised as a separate safety committee. This was done on the advice of the Chief Safety Officer of the organisation.

2 Composition of the Works Safety Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The members of the safety committee are invited by the management to participate, being chosen for their known attitudes towards safety and also for their good relations with their fellow employees.

The committee consists of six members. Four are drawn from employees on the shop floor, and one of these is always elected chairman. Each of the four members is selected from one of the main departments into which the factory is normally divided for reasons of the process. A fifth member is the Assistant Safety Officer who is responsible for keeping records and also for the provision of first-aid equipment and protective clothing. He is generally a junior member of management. The sixth member is the Works Engineer, who, as previously indicated, is also the firm's Safety Officer. He acts as secretary to the committee, and in this function he appears to be similar to a "Clerk to a Council" providing necessary guidance and advice to the members. The Works Engineer concerned at these premises has held the position, and also that of Safety Officer, since the start of the firm in 1958, and it is clear that the zeal and drive of this individual has been to a large measure responsible for the successful functioning of the committee and also for the implementation of safety policy within the works.

There are no provisions for the regular replacement of members at set intervals. The management work on the basis that one does not change a "winning" team, but there appear to be no reasons why changes could not be made at any time if this were thought desirable. The committee meets regularly each quarter, when formal procedures are carried out and Minutes duly prepared. There is frequent, sometimes daily, contact between the Works Engineer/Safety Officer and other members of the committee. The committee has met *ad hoc* to deal with special circumstances, usually to discuss a special project such as the proposed installation of paper-making machinery which the firm are proposing to bring into production in the near future.

From available evidence it appears that safety matters requiring attention are never held up for meetings. The members of the committee are empowered to submit job cards to the Works Engineer on their own initiative in respect of matters that have been brought to their attention. In committee meetings only those jobs which have not been completed or which have presented special difficulties are considered.

3 Training

Other than the general guidance and advice given by the firm's Safety Officer, no special training in safety matters is given to committee members.

4 Machinery for Communicating the Outcome of Meetings

The Minutes of committee meetings are normally made available within three days and are circulated to all members of line management. If any matter requires the personal attention of a supervisor or foreman, the Safety Officer communicates with the individual, either verbally or by memorandum, depending upon the gravity of the matter.

The Minutes of the committee meetings are circulated to committee members and are also posted prominently on all notice boards throughout the factory.

5 Functions of Works Safety Committee

There are no formal terms of reference, except that stated by the Works Engineer/Safety Officer, to "eliminate accidents".

The committee has adopted a set order of discussing business, and matters under the following headings generally figure in the agenda:

- (1) *Accidents*: Discussion of circumstances surrounding any incidents reported, even if these do not cause "lost time", followed by analysis of statistics.
- (2) *Sales of Safety Footwear*: Comparison with previous sales figures and consideration of any improvements.
- (3) *Incentive Scheme*: Deciding winners of awards and discussion on effectiveness of existing schemes.
- (4) *Special Items*: e.g. poster campaigns, fire precautions, desirable new equipment.
- (5) *Complaints*: This generally concerns discussion of jobs held up relating to safety. It would appear from perusal of the Minutes of the committee over the years that this item occurs infrequently.

Discussions on incentive schemes have proved very fruitful, as also have certain decisions taken as a result of studying statistics, e.g. foot injuries have largely been eliminated after intensive "plugging" of safety footwear, including the use of subsidies, until approximately 99 per cent of all employees (including management) wear such footwear. It is apparently generally understood among committee members that trivia are not for discussion. Matters concerning road safety and safety in the home are occasionally brought into discussion. This is regarded by the management as helpful to create a sense that accident prevention does not stop at the factory gate.

The committee does not itself investigate accidents. It discusses the results of investigations into an accident. The management carries out actual investigations, and the Works Engineer/Safety Officer generally takes part in these. A full range of accident statistics is available, and these are discussed and studied with a view to their intelligent application. Committee members do not carry out formal inspections, since they are expected to be continuously active in this direction whilst at work in the factory. They are empowered to make representations to any level of management.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievement

The work of the committee appears to be very effective, not only in reducing the accident frequency rate to a very low level but also in virtually eliminating serious accidents.

The opinion of the management is that the safety committee is successful since the efforts of the management have the full and active co-operation of the workers. This they regard as a response to the firm's policy of achieving the highest possible standard of safety at the premises. The opinion of the workers is that the safety committee is most useful and its efforts in this field appear to be widely recognised.

It is clear that the good results obtained by this committee should be attributed to the following:

- (a) The personality and zeal shown towards safety matters by the Works Engineer, who regards the inculcation of safety throughout the firm as one of his primary duties.
- (b) The size and nature of the firm; approximately 170 workers are employed in a small rural locality and the matter of industrial relations has been the subject of assiduous attention by the management for a number of years.
- (c) A low labour turnover, most of the workers being middle-aged with a responsible attitude towards the carrying out of their work.
- (d) The guarding of machinery at the premises is under the direct control of the Works Engineer, who also has the responsibility for financial expenditure, and is thus able to implement guarding immediately any item requiring fencing becomes evident to him.
- (e) As indicated above, the basic aim of the management has been to cultivate employees' responsibility and interest in matters of safety without abdicating the responsibility that must rest with the management.
- (f) The committee is effective because of the detailed care and attention given to every safety problem that arises. The interest and enthusiasm from the top management down to the shop floor is impressive.

Factory No. 5

1 Background of Firm

This firm was founded in 1936 on the site of a derelict bleach works to manufacture dressing materials for the leather industry. Since the war the firm have expanded rapidly in the field of organic chemicals. There has been a similar expansion in the number of employees from the original handful of workers to the present number of over 700 of whom about 350 could be described as manual process workers. All this enormous expansion has taken place within the confines of the original four and a half acre site. In recent years congestion problems have become acute—the firm now use in large quantities over 100 highly hazardous materials—toxic, caustic and highly flammable. Despite these difficulties the firm's safety record is a good one and there has been a slow but very steady decline in the accident frequency rate during the past 10 years. The firm have always had a progressive attitude in labour relations. Relations between the management and the unions are most cordial. There has been joint consultation at the factory for nearly 20 years and a joint safety committee for 17 years. The present safety organisation of the firm, however, dates from 1963.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The firm have three Safety Committees under the following titles:

- (1) Safety Management Committee
- (2) Works Safety Committee
- (3) Safety Advisory Committee

Committee 1 is concerned chiefly with technical safety problems connected with plant design and operation. Because of the high level of its members it acts very much as an executive committee and can authorise the spending of considerable sums of money. This committee meets regularly—about once every six weeks.

Committee 2 is the true safety committee as normally understood. This committee is purely advisory, but there is good evidence to show that all serious matters raised on it receive serious attention from management. There are no instances of really serious defects being allowed to go uncorrected if raised at this committee. This committee cannot of course authorise the spending of large sums of money, but should such a matter be raised it would normally be referred to committee 1 for more detailed consideration. The committee is a fairly large one but it is the policy of the firm to include as complete a cross-section of works personnel as possible. The shop floor workers are elected by their own members. They tend to be the union representatives of the men and to hold their positions for a considerable time. From the safety committee Minutes, the workers' representatives appear to be sensible and keen, it would appear that highly suitable persons have been elected to the committee by this method. Persons other than these are appointed by the management and are changed in rotation about once every six months. There is little evidence to show that safety matters are sometimes held back for safety committee meetings. This practice is definitely discouraged by the management who are aware that it could be a possible danger. Workers are actively encouraged to report safety defects forthwith to their departmental managers or directly to the Safety Manager. The committee meets on a regular basis once every five weeks.

Committee 3 is convened *ad hoc* to deal specifically either with safety in the design stage before new plant is commissioned or to discuss radical alterations in process or plant structure to improve safety. It is interesting to note that an independent consultant sits on this committee. The committee has been quite active over the past few years due, no doubt, to the constant expansion in the factory.

3 Training

There is no safety training programme for members of the works safety committee as such. The firm however have embarked on a very extensive safety training programme covering the whole of the works. The plant managers for example will all have been on a residential course to RoSPA within the next few years. A number of members of the safety committee will, therefore, have had some form of safety training.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

Minutes of the works safety committee are kept and distributed throughout the works. In addition the firm publish what are known as Safety Circulars and Works Rules, and many of these latter items are published as a result of discussion at the committee. A Safety Circular deals with a specific problem from

one substance or process—as such it will not be of general interest throughout the whole of the works so it is only distributed to those persons concerned. Copies are sent down to foreman level and in addition copies are posted in prominent positions in the plant affected. Work regulations are issued to all persons concerned and deal with such items as laying down operating procedures and requiring the wearing of goggles and protective clothing for certain processes.

5 Functions of the Committee

The safety committee has no formal terms of reference. Its duties are to advise in general on any safety matter arising in the works. One of the surprising aspects of the committee's work is the extraordinary wide range of topics discussed. It is difficult to pinpoint subjects which arise most frequently but, as is to be expected in a works of this type, eye protection and the use of other types of protective clothing appear to be discussed more frequently than other items. One of the heartening aspects of the committee's work is the absence of trivial complaints. The wide range of subjects discussed is typical of the work of the committee over the years.

The committee does not investigate accidents—this is considered to be entirely the function of the Safety Officer. At each monthly meeting, accident statistics are discussed and also the details of any particularly important accident are brought to the notice of the members. It is not the practice at this factory to go through each accident which has occurred during the previous month.

The committee members do not have any executive functions within the works, nor do they carry out any self-inspection programmes or similar schemes. The firm carries out self-inspection programmes but this is normally undertaken by the Safety Officer and management of the department concerned.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievements

One of the outstanding achievements of this committee has been to assist in the introduction of works regulations making it a condition of employment to wear goggles and safety helmets in certain specified areas of the works. The regulations were, of course, introduced by the management, but before this was done they took good care to ensure that they had won the unions support.

To sum up: the philosophy of this firm is that safety is a function of management. They are, however, fully committed to a policy of joint consultation, to this end they have set up quite elaborate machinery. As far as safety matters are concerned this machinery appears to work extremely well. The safety committee is supported both by management and workers, there is no doubt that this factory is safer because such a committee exists.

Factory No. 6

1 Background of Firm

This is a subsidiary company of a large group and occupies two neighbouring factories. About 400 people are employed in the manufacture of fluorescent signs, certain specialised electronic valves, and manufacture of road signs.

The firm works as an independent constituent of the group. There are special hazards in these two factories, arising from power presses, cellulose spraying, epoxy resins, use of sealed and unsealed radioactive materials and use of mercury.

The number of reported accidents was four in 1965 and five in 1966. The safety committee is the only safety organisation; there is no Safety Officer as

such but a personal responsibility for safety (in its broadest sense) is regarded as an essential ingredient of management, from the top to the bottom of the management chain.

The safety committee has been in existence for 33 years.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The Works Superintendent is the chairman of the committee (10 strong) and the other members are:

the Education and Training Officer, one maintenance electrician, one maintenance engineer, the Nursing Sister, the Works Accountant, the Chief Technician, the Shop Steward Convener, one other departmental foreman and one shop steward.

It is arranged that management and persons from the floor are more or less equal in numbers. The members of the committee are replaced from time to time but serve for no set terms.

The committee meets as such every three months but a part of it makes a monthly factory tour. The committee also has "crash" meetings for emergencies and special meetings to review all notifiable accidents. There is no evidence that items which should have had early attention have been retained for discussion at the committee. Safety matters are sometimes raised at the quarterly meetings where the shop stewards meet the Works Manager.

3 Training

Most of the committee has been taken to the Industrial Health and Safety Centre. The firm has arranged for the showing of various safety films to all supervisory personnel and to the members of the safety committee and has arranged practical training in artificial resuscitation. Some literature, e.g. "Accidents" is circulated to the committee.

4 Machinery for Communication of Outcome of Meetings

Minutes and reports of meetings are circulated to all line management and to members of the committee.

5 Function of the Works Safety Committee

There is no formal constitution on terms of reference. Apart from emergency meetings to consider accidents or to discuss special problems, e.g. new plant layouts or processes, it considers any matters brought before it by members and recommendations of H.M. Factory Inspectors. Accident statistics are prepared by management but are not considered by the committee.

The main work of the committee is, however, to undertake monthly inspections of the parts of the factory and to consider the reports of the inspections. The inspections are carried out by sections of the committee, plus the foreman of the department concerned. The inspection normally takes a full day and the whole works is covered in five or six inspections.

Any matters that the committee considers require action are put out to an appropriate member of the committee and there is a formal "report back" at the next meeting.

6 Comments on Achievements of Committee

The committee carries out effective and useful work. It receives the support of management and of the trade unions and covers factory, office and laboratory employees.

The strength of the committee is that it has a job to do and that it has the support and stimulation of the management. The Works Director is keenly interested in safety. He recently visited the Industrial Health and Safety Centre and decided, in consequence, that all new permanent recruits to the company staff should go too.

Factory No. 7

1 Background of Firm

The firm (which is a branch of a national concern) employs approximately 550 and is engaged in weighing machine manufacture. The works include an iron foundry. The management has a co-operative and responsible attitude to safety, and for the type of works the safety performance is good. The committee has existed since 1948.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

Although the committee had worked satisfactorily, and achieved good results since its formation, early in 1967 an investigation into its working took place, and it was decided that wider coverage of the factory was desirable. A new committee was formed on the following basis:

(1) Permanent Members

Maintenance Engineer, chairman.
Production Engineer, deputy chairman.
Personnel Officer, secretary.

(2) Elected Representatives

One member of supervisory staff at least of foreman level, and a total of eight other persons consisting of one representative from each section of the factory including a tool room apprentice. These persons can either be members of a trades union or non-union members, suitability for the job being the most important requirement.

(3) Service on Committee

Apart from the three permanent officials, a new committee was set up of which half the members retire at the end of 12 months service, and the other half at the end of two years service, thereafter the committee will be composed of members who serve for a period of two years. To maintain continuity and effectiveness in the work of the committee, half the elected committee retires annually.

(4) Frequency of Meetings

Meetings are held monthly, but safety matters requiring urgent attention are dealt with by management between meetings.

3 Training

The Production Engineer, Personnel Officer and a shop steward member of the original committee attended a RoSPA course on Safety Committees, a partial result of which is the improved constitution and representation referred to above.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

All committee members and supervisory staff to foreman level receive Minutes.

5 Functions of the Safety Committee

The terms of reference are:

To promote safety to the best interests of all employees, to give improved

efficiency, and the avoidance of wastage and suffering, which may be brought about by such items as:

Safe Working Procedure e.g.

- (1) Permits to work.
- (2) How to improve machine guarding without unduly restricting machine operation.
- (3) Safe environmental conditions such as lighting, ventilation, access, fire protection, good housekeeping, etc.
- (4) The improvement in the observation of safe working practice.
- (5) To encourage employees to adopt the correct method of material handling by the recommendation of using suitable posters, booklets, safety rules, etc.
- (6) To encourage employees to use protective clothing and apparatus where provided. To encourage the wearing of safety footwear.
- (7) Dangerous occurrences or accidents—examinations thereof—to prevent recurrence in the future.
- (8) Discussions of previous period reportable accident(s).
- (9) Report on safety suggestion(s) submitted.

Whilst there is no formal agenda prepared for committee meetings, members are free to raise any issues concerning safety, such items as ventilation, noise, protective clothing and machine safety are discussed. Although the committee as a whole do not investigate accidents, they are discussed and if necessary steps are taken to avoid future occurrences.

Self inspection is not formally carried out, but members can and do note points which they are then able to raise with management for action. The atmosphere is such that these are most likely to be acted upon if they have any substance.

6 Comments on Committee's Achievements

The committee seems to be regarded as an effective organisation, from whose meetings useful points are raised and the necessary action is taken. The question of employee participation had raised some difficulties in that people appeared satisfied to rely on their long standing representatives to act for them and management needed to ask employees to serve. However, with monthly meetings and following the RoSPA course there has seemed to be a resurgence of interest and contested elections now take place. In the case of this committee there is very good support from both management and trade union representatives and spirit of co-operation between them.

Factory No. 8

1 Background of Firm

This factory employs 300 people in the manufacture of soap, glycerine, and detergents. Its safety policy is that every employee from top to bottom is personally responsible for his own safe behaviour and for reporting any hazard that he sees and cannot eliminate himself.

The object of the factory's safety policy is total elimination of all accidents, not only lost-time accidents. The factory's declaration in its safety handout is "This Company INSISTS on SAFE operations". Direct responsibility is placed

upon departmental managers (responsible for an area and 12 to 15 workers) for ensuring safe operation.

The safety organisation can be divided into three parts:

(a) The Safety Manager who is responsible for advising all grades of management of safety requirements and has no executive authority apart from his power to stop machinery, and call for a report from management in the event of serious conditions being found. He also inspects the factory daily, gives all new entrants their initial training in the firm's safety policy and trains all trainee managers in all aspects of safety.

(b) Each department is its own committee with all workers being compulsory members. One meeting a month is compulsory but extra meetings can be called to discuss unusual hazards or accidents, both inside and outside the factory.

(c) Each group manager holds a monthly safety meeting of the committee at which all the managers and specialists in his group attend.

The factory has had two lost-time accidents in the past four years. Its best record is a period of 1,333,000 man-hours worked without a lost-time accident. Department committees in their present form have been in existence for about 20 years.

2 Composition of Committees and Frequency of Meetings

There are three types of safety committee organised as follows:

(a) Department Safety Committee

Run by the department manager with the Safety Manager assisting if an enquiry is being held into an accident. All department personnel are members of the committee which meets monthly. Each committee has 12 to 15 members. The committee can be convened at other times to discuss a hazard or accident (always when there has been a lost-time accident) even if this means shutting down production. Action to eliminate a hazard can, of course, be taken without waiting for the committee meeting.

(b) Group Managers Safety Committee

Each group manager runs his own meeting. It is a meeting of management within his group and normally meets once a month.

(c) Works Manager's Safety Meeting

This is a meeting of all factory managers which can be convened at any time by the Works Manager.

In addition, safety matters can come up for discussion at the works council. This body consists of elected representatives of hourly and office staff with an equal number of management (including the Works Manager, Chief Engineer and Personnel Manager) and meets once a month.

3 Training

The Safety Manager talks to each workman on engagement and this initial talk deals with the company policy on safety, factory safety rules and the fire drill. A free issue of a safety booklet containing factory safety rules helps to drive home the points made during the talk. The employee then passes to his department manager for training.

After 14 days he is tested in works rules by the department manager and the Safety Manager and a pass of 80 per cent correct answers is required. If successful, the employee has his safety booklet endorsed and can then qualify for a merit payment above the minimum rate. This has, to the firm's regret, been in abeyance during "the freeze". Each employee has to undergo a similar test annually.

Trainee managers go through an internal training course organised by the Safety Manager and the trainee's Group Manager. No trainee can become a manager until proficiency is achieved. This proficiency is tested at qualification sessions held by the Safety Manager, Group Manager and Works Manager.

4 Machinery of Communication

As all personnel in the factory are on department committees, they are kept fully informed of safety matters in their own departments and in the factory. Exchange of information between Department Managers occurs at group manager and works manager committees.

5 Functions of Safety Committees

(a) Department Safety Committee

This committee has three main functions:

- (1) To review safety behaviour and conditions in the department and plan corrective action where necessary. Before each meeting a survey of unsafe conditions in the department is done by the Manager and another committee member.
- (2) To make all employees aware of factory/company safety performance, and to examine the causes of unusual or serious accidents in the company or outside.
- (3) To train its members to play a full part in improving safety performance. The Department Manager calls and runs the meeting. He is trained in running meetings.

Each committee member is expected to be alert to notice, and determined to correct, any action or situation which constitutes a safety hazard to himself or to others. Anything which he cannot put right himself he should report to the Department Manager. If any engineering work is required to eliminate a hazard, the Safety Manager prepares a priority list for engineering department and follows up to see that the work is done.

(b) Group Safety Committees

These have three main functions:

- (1) To inform management of safety activities within the company and outside.
- (2) To discuss and agree action to eliminate problems which cannot be resolved at department level.
- (3) To develop safety training.

(c) Works Manager's Safety Committee

This is not a regular meeting but is called by the Works Manager to discuss major issues of safety policy or administration. It is also called whenever a lost-time accident has taken place to formulate a plan of action to prevent more lost-time accidents occurring.

6 Comments on Committees' Achievements

The success of this scheme appears to be due to personal responsibility and personal accountability. Management consider success is due to the personal commitment of all employees, and that this comes from good training and personal example.

Factory No. 9

1 Background of Firm

The firm is an all-American company with two other factories in the UK. They manufacture earth moving and handling equipment, and some 300 persons are employed. The firm started up some 10-12 years ago as a small undertaking. The executives have always been interested in safety and management give the safety policy their full support from the Managing Director and the Company Chairman downwards. The part-time Safety Officer was appointed six months ago, and is the Fire and Security Officer. The safety committee has been in existence for four years. It is now a committee of six members.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The part-time Safety Officer is the committee chairman. The other members of the committee are the Industrial Engineer, production supervisor and three employees elected from the shop floor. Foremen do not sit on the committee. There are no provisions as to regular replacements after a certain term of office. Vacancies occur naturally if members are promoted or leave the company. There are no difficulties in filling a vacancy. It seemed that it was considered to be an honour to be elected to the safety committee. The safety committee is quite distinct from the works committee. The committee meets monthly, as far as possible. A member of the committee is also leading fireman of the voluntary works fire brigade.

The committee is never convened to deal with special circumstances, although interested persons can be invited to attend a special meeting. The firm's Works Doctor is invited to attend on occasions. There was no evidence that safety matters requiring attention were held up for meetings. The Safety Officer would deal with these matters direct.

3 Training

No safety training is given to committee members. Past experience is the main qualification.

4 Machinery for Communicating the Outcome of Meetings

Copies of the Minutes of the meetings are distributed to management and Minutes of the meetings on notice boards in the various shops provide the information service to line management, including foremen. Every member of the safety committee and works committee has a copy of the Minutes of the safety committee meetings. The 12 members of the voluntary fire service have personal copies of the Minutes. Workers on the shop floor would read the Minutes on the departmental notice boards.

5 Functions of the Works Safety Committee

The safety committee has no formal or written terms of reference. It exists to eliminate accidents, to assist in the investigation of all accidents and to discuss methods of prevention of accidents. Publicity is given to accident prevention by posters. No particular subjects are prominent on the agendas. The subjects are brought forward from the works committee which meets according to need.

The company is very proud of the Queen's Industrial Award for 1966 for Export Trade. A special emblem and flag are exhibited, the firm is allowed to use the decoration on their headed notepaper. The award gives the firm an added incentive to production with safety.

There has not been any tendency for the subject matter discussed to degenerate into trivia. Complaints from the shop floor are submitted to the shop manager and he then refers the matter to the safety committee if he cannot deal with it. All items for the agenda are vetted beforehand and before reaching the committee meeting. The Safety Officer investigates all accidents and at his discretion can take a committee member along with him. Records are kept of all "lost-time" accidents.

The committee makes use of the statistics available from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, but no other statistics are used. There are no self-inspection programmes and committee members have no executive functions in the works. Their functions are purely advisory.

6 Comments on Committee's Effectiveness

The opinions of the Chairman, the Safety Officer, the Trade Union Convener and workers' representative coincided. It was considered that more people are safety conscious than ever before. Workers demand safety shoes with protected toe-caps, and eye protection, and discuss the safety posters exhibited. Statistics of all lost-time accidents are kept and are totalled quarterly. Reports of lost-time accidents are sent to the parent company in America at monthly intervals. The AEU Convener considered that in the four years that he has been on the safety committee, they have had a good record and have obtained results. Items brought up at the monthly meetings are drawn to the attention of the staff or department concerned, and action is taken and reported to the Chairman who will report to committee members at the next committee meeting.

In the opinion of the Chairman, Safety Officer and Trade Union representative, the committee was most effective and no improvements were needed.

Factory No. 10

1 Background of Firm

This factory is part of a group and employs about 400 people in the production of synthetic fibres.

The group safety and fire prevention policy is organised on a national scale under the general guidance of a Chief Safety Advisor. The central safety department is concerned with matters of policy, with the production of safety booklets and codes of practice, and the issue of advisory circulars. The local organisation is worked to suit the needs of each particular factory within the general policy laid down centrally. Basically, the attitude is that safety is a management function and it would appear that safety performance of individual factories depends on the personality of the manager to some extent. The Manager at this factory appears to be a forceful personality, and both he and his deputy have a genuine interest in safety. The accident frequency rate for 1966 was 2.5. The management are far from happy with this figure and have reorganised the safety arrangement at the factory in an effort to reduce it.

The works safety committee has been in existence for two years, but early this year it was supplemented by departmental safety committees and the introduction of periodic hazard surveys.

2 Composition of Works Safety Committee and Frequency of Meetings

There are two types of committee at this factory:

(a) There is a monthly departmental safety meeting on each shift. Every

worker on that shift meets the shift manager, who acts as chairman. Points of safety and working conditions in general are discussed. After the meeting the shift manager has to report to the Works Manager. In addition, the shift manager and one member of the operating staff have to carry out a hazard survey once per month. Each operator takes it in turn to accompany the shift manager on this survey, and eventually all members of that shift will have taken part in a survey.

(b) The works accident prevention committee deals in the main with local matters of policy, and any faults highlighted in one particular department can be brought to the attention of other departments if they are relevant. This committee is made up as follows: the Works Manager is the chairman, and his deputy is the deputy chairman; the Safety Officer acts as secretary, the Chief Engineer sits on the committee, and there is a supervisor and a works representative from each of the departmental committees.

The Works Manager and his deputy, the Chief Engineer and the Safety Officer are permanent members of the committee, but the departmental representatives are changed at each meeting.

The accident prevention committee meets once every two months and has only been convened *ad hoc* on one occasion. It is found that safety matters are dealt with quickly and efficiently by the departmental meetings and the hazard survey, and consequently there is very little delay in getting things done. There is no obstacle placed in the way of a worker approaching line management with safety suggestions between meetings, and if action is necessary, safety is given priority. There are special internal works order forms for this purpose.

3 Training

No safety training is given to committee members as such, but each new starter at the factory is given basic safety instruction and issued with a booklet "Your Safety". Supervisors are given more detailed instruction in safety, by means of a manual specially written for their guidance.

4 Machinery for Communicating the Outcome of Meetings

The accident prevention committee itself is used for this purpose, as problems which have been highlighted in the departmental meetings are brought to the attention of other departments where relevant. The Minutes of the meeting are circulated down to supervisor level. As every worker attends the monthly departmental meeting, the dissemination of safety matters is more or less automatic. In addition to this the Minutes of the accident prevention committee meetings are posted on the works notice boards.

5 Functions of the Works Safety Committee

The group policy on safety committees is that each committee should work along the lines decided in a group booklet, "Works Safety Committees". Each member is given a copy which lays down the following broad principles:

(1) *Personal Example*

By working safely themselves, and being known for their close interest in safety matters, members can do a lot to convince others of the value of making organised safety a part of the daily life of the factory.

(2) *Recommendations to management*

In their advisory capacity, the committee must put before their manager any proposals which they believe will lead to even better safety standards and practices.

(3) *Co-operation with others*

They should, in all possible ways, help line management to ensure that agreed courses of action are carried out.

(4) *Conforming with the Regulations*

Care should be taken to see that the safety requirements in the various Acts and Regulations are complied with.

(5) *Prevention is better than cure*

While it is the duty of management to investigate each accident and dangerous occurrence, with a view to taking steps to avoid a repetition, the safety committee is expected to prevent mishaps *now* rather than talk about them later.

The discussions at the committee cover a wide field but, in general, a good deal of time appears to be spent on discussion of accidents and housekeeping, and safe means of access problems. As problems are generally dealt with as they arise, there does not appear to have been any outstanding successful item dealt with by the committee. There does not appear to have been a tendency for subject matter discussed to degenerate into trivia, possibly because of the strong personality of the Manager who acts as chairman. The committee itself does not investigate accidents. The departmental managers investigate accidents, assisted by the Safety Officer, and the reports of these investigations are presented to the committee.

Simple accident statistics are kept by the Safety Officer and these are presented to the works accident prevention committee. The monthly departmental hazard survey is a form of self inspection—persons carrying out this survey are, of course, members of the departmental committee, but not necessarily members of the works committee at that particular time.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievements

It was management's opinion that a large safety committee for a factory of this size was unwieldy and committee time was taken up discussing matters which, though important, were of limited interest to many members of the committee. Committee meetings tended to be long and there appeared to be difficulty in maintaining interest. It was in an attempt to overcome these difficulties that the present system of departmental safety committees and hazard surveys was introduced, and although these schemes were only introduced at the beginning of the year, the system seems to be working well and to have kindled interest and enthusiasm.

The safety organisation at this factory appears to have been successful in creating an interest in safety, right down to the shop floor. One of the workers interviewed, who has served on the factory safety committee, stated that the system of departmental safety committees meant people are aware of their responsibilities, both to themselves and to other workers. He has worked at other firms where management seemed to do a lot of work on safety matters, but results never reached shop floor level. He felt that this active participation by workers and management was the best method he had experienced and was very enthusiastic and keen.

Although this organisation is new it appears to be successful, and it is obvious that both management and workers are actively participating.

Factory No. 11

1 Background of Firm

This firm engage in hydraulic engineering mainly for tipping lorries. They employ about 425 persons and are part of a group. The firm have a resolute safety policy and a committee forming part of the works council. The committee has been in existence at least five years.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The Works Engineer is the chairman. There is no deputy chairman. The secretary is the Personnel Manager, the committee has seven members: the Works Engineer, the Personnel Manager, two superintendents on the management side, and three men on the workers' side. They intend to co-opt two foremen on to the committee to serve by rota. The Works Engineer is a part-time Safety Officer. Members are elected for three years. The committee meets monthly. Any untoward event such as a small fire brings the committee into immediate action. Safety matters are not held up for committee meetings.

3 Training

No formal training is being given. The members of the committee are given appropriate booklets as they appear. The firm have built a new lecture room which they expect to take into use shortly; it is hoped that some of the lectures to be given will be on safety topics.

4 Machinery for Communicating the Outcome of Meetings

Committee decisions are communicated by Minutes to the Managing Director, all managers, superintendents and members of the committee. Executive decisions are communicated verbally and in writing to supervisors and foremen and disseminated by workers' members of the committee.

5 Functions of the Committee

There are no formal terms of reference. The most frequent subjects are lifting, fire and internal works transport. The work of the committee has reduced accidents quite substantially. The committee does not itself investigate accidents but takes note of accident trends in the works. Each workers' representative on the committee is an appointed part-time safety officer in his own department and has the full backing of the company and immediate access to the Works Engineer.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievements

Management and men are agreed that the effectiveness of the committee derives substantially from the role of the shop floor members as part-time safety officers. This role was at first resented or treated lightly but has come to be accepted as a normal part of the organisation and discipline. The shop floor members of the committee were enthusiastic about their function.

Factory No. 12

1 Background of Firm

This firm occupies a six acre site and about 300 persons are employed in the re-rolling of steel bars, both at mechanised mills and hand mills. The firm have

occupied the site for this purpose since 1913, and about four years ago became a member of a large group.

The group formulates general safety policies which are implemented through the group Safety Officer who deals with individual Safety Officers attached to member factories in the group. Group policies are of a fairly general nature applicable to all factories, and include housekeeping campaigns and various safety contests in which all workers are encouraged to participate. In addition to group policies, individual member firms formulate their own safety policies in relation to their particular processes and needs. The individual factories' safety committees are instrumental in formulating the individual factories' safety policies and in implementing all safety policies.

At this particular factory, the management from Managing Director downwards has a very positive attitude towards safety matters. The safety performance of the firm is good—there are few reportable accidents. The percentage of time lost through all accidents (0.23 per cent) was said to be well below the average for this type of industry.

This committee has been in existence since 1952, but it was partially re-organised when the firm joined the group.

2 Composition of the Works Safety Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The committee chairman is the General Works Manager in sole charge of production. The committee's secretary is the Works Engineer. There is no deputy chairman.

There are 11 members of this safety committee, including the chairman and secretary. In addition, management members consist of the Works Director and the Safety Officer. Foremen are represented by the Mill Supervisor and the Warehouse Supervisor. Workers are represented by a union member (normally the works union representative), a maintenance fitter, maintenance electrician, a wagon supervisor and a transport mechanic. The workers' representatives are appointed by the management by virtue of the committee member's employment, but these members have to be approved by the safety committee. All parts of the works are represented on the safety committee. The Safety Officer is a very active member of the committee, particularly in passing on information gleaned from numerous quarters and meetings he attends, and in analysing all accidents and keeping records thereof, which are studied by the committee. There are no provisions for regular replacements of committee members after a certain term of office.

The committee meets monthly. It has never been convened *ad hoc* to deal with special circumstances. There is no evidence that safety matters requiring attention are held up for meetings.

3 Training

No formal training is given to committee members. However, as part of the firm's safety policy, the Safety Officer attends as many useful courses as possible, e.g. at the RoSPA Centre, and he imparts what he learns to the committee as part of the normal duties of the committee.

4 Machinery for Communicating the Outcome of Meetings

The Minutes of the committee meetings are circulated only to the committee members and to the Managing Director. As stated previously, the committee includes foremen. The committee members communicate the outcome of meetings to the workers on the shop floor. Any particularly useful pieces of

information are posted on the works notice board. The firm have found this a satisfactory method of communication, and all departments are represented on the works safety committee.

5 Functions of the Works Safety Committee

The committee has no formal terms of reference. Housekeeping and welfare matters, including protective clothing, purchase of safety boots, messroom facilities, appeared to arise most frequently at the committee's meetings.

The committee considers that its most noteworthy successes have been:

- (1) the provision and development of a mechanised feed for bar reeling machines. This was developed some years ago and people still visit this factory to see it;
- (2) considerable work has been done in the field of safe methods of work;
- (3) it was as a result of safety committee meetings and recommendations that a medical centre was set up at this factory with a part-time doctor in attendance.

The committee does not investigate accidents as a committee. However, the Safety Officer, who is a member of the committee, investigates all accidents, and keeps a running record of all accidents classified into types, e.g. burns, bruises, cuts, eye injuries, on a monthly basis. These records are studied by the committee and schemes have been planned at the committee meetings, and put into effect, to reduce these accidents. Last year, cuts were the most common cause of injury, and the committee helped to devise safer methods of handling and the provision of suitable gloves, which has appreciably reduced these accidents.

Committee members have the power to stop any dangerous practice or any dangerous machinery forthwith. The members do not take part in self-inspection programmes, but the Safety Officer carries out a self-inspection programme on a day to day basis.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievements

The accident records kept by the Safety Officer indicate the reduction in the number of monthly accidents. There was a steady decline in the numbers of accidents from January to December last year, and there are less accidents this year when comparing monthly figures with the identical months last year. This can doubtless be attributed largely to the work of the Safety Officer and the safety committee. Apart from accident figures, the committee seems to be very effective because of the enthusiasm of the committee generally and the complete backing of the factory Board and management.

The committee chairman, secretary, Safety Officer, Works Director, and two representatives of the workers all thought that the conditions in this factory had improved greatly since the committee was formed, especially since it was remoulded some four or five years ago. All the people seen thought that a safety committee was an essential institution at any factory.

Factory No. 13

1 Background of Firm

The report relates to a firm which employs approximately 3,500 people in its factory in making biscuits of all types and Christmas puddings.

Their safety policy is founded on the belief that accidents cause misery and loss of time to worker and employer respectively with consequential financial

loss to both parties. Management have for 30 years insisted on all new plant and installations being vetted at the makers' factory by their part-time Safety Officer before it is taken into use. (This occasionally falls down in respect of plant modified or re-sited locally.) He makes recommendations and these are carried out and approved by him before the plant is commissioned.

Safety posters are displayed in many parts of the factory. Workers are encouraged to buy protective clothing through the firm at reduced prices by weekly instalments. Senior management endeavour to "set the tone" by manifesting interest in safety but they are sometimes let down by departmental managers of supervisory status who are under such pressure with production matters as to be unable to cope with incidental safety problems.

The safety committee has existed for 45 years but has become very active in the last six years under the leadership of the present Accident Prevention Organiser, who has worked at the factory all his life and has risen to be secretary of the works committee, having previously been a prominent shop floor member. As well as safety, he deals with many personal welfare matters and is secretary of the factory National Savings Group. There is no doubt that the recent success of the safety committee is due not only to his personal drive but also to the respect and trust which all the staff place in him. He is a known quantity—not a "new boy" telling them how to do their jobs.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The firm call this their accident prevention committee and it is one of four sub-committees arising from the works committee (who are 45 workers—no management members) and the joint council (which consists of 10 workers from the works committee and 10 management members). Membership of the works committee is by annual election among all workers, the works committee then elect 10 of their number to sit on the joint council.

To constitute the accident prevention committee, the joint council appoint from their number three workers and three management members and the part-time Safety Officer acts as secretary. The firm very strongly believe that accident prevention is a shared responsibility. Thus the chairman may be either a worker or a management member. Appointments are made annually.

The committee meets monthly but urgent matters would be dealt with without delay by the Safety Officer.

3 Training

No special training is given to members but guidance is given by the Safety Officer. Literature is freely available.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

A quarterly report of all accidents and a statistical analysis of these is presented to the joint council, all works committee members and the company's directors. The Minutes of the monthly meetings are available for anybody to see. After approval of the quarterly reports by the joint council, copies are distributed to the members of all the committees at the works, thus achieving a wide measure of circulation. Any other communication goes direct from the committee secretary to the departmental managers concerned.

5 Functions of the Committee

The committee has clear terms of reference (with some emphasis on inspection of guards) and is advisory in its functions. It forms a rota to carry out inspection

of the factory for safety, health and welfare purposes; as a result much of the business at the meeting is to discuss the work and findings of these inspections. A study of the statistical analysis of accidents is a regular feature. Sometimes the committee will investigate an accident of special interest or as an exercise, but usually this is done by the secretary as part of his normal duties. The firm are aware of the risk that meetings could degenerate into trivial discussions but (no doubt precisely because it is recognised) this has not occurred.

Of particular interest, and of importance to the firm, is the "Hazard Form". These are available in boxes throughout the factory for any worker to complete. On completion by the worker it is countersigned by his works committee member (one of the 45) and then passes to the department supervisor for action or comment whichever is appropriate, then referred to the department manager. The completed form then passes to the Safety Officer. The forms are reported on at the monthly meetings of the committee and appear to be of great value in its work.

It is difficult to pick out specially successful items but recently the suggestion by the committee that more workers would buy and use protective footwear if the firm allowed credit facilities without charging interest has proved a notable success.

6 Comments on Achievement

As the committee has existed for 45 years, it is difficult to assess the number of accidents it may have prevented. A woman convener for the Transport and General Workers Union and a man convener for the Bakers Union were interviewed as well as senior management and the committee secretary. All expressed their appreciation of the committee and respect for its work.

Factory No. 14

1 Background of Firm

This report relates to a large firm of food manufacturers and retail distributors through a chain of retail shops. At this factory they deal with meat products of all kinds and employ about 2,000 workers. Many of these are women working a normal day shift but increasing numbers are employed part-time and at evening shifts. There is no laid-down safety policy but for many years the firm has been in the lead in developing safety of machinery. No new machine is fitted into these works until it has been properly vetted by the engineering staff and the Safety Officer. This firm produced the first satisfactory guard for de-rinding machines and developed the latest guard, false table, brake and magnetic switch for pie and tart machines. The accident rate is high due to two factors: (1) slipping on floors and stairs; (2) injuries from knives when boning meat. Both these items are difficult to rectify but it is not for want of trying.

The safety committee has been in existence since November 1954.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The Personnel Officer is the chairman of the safety committee and the Safety Officer is secretary. There are six members from the shop floor "elected" to the committee. This turns out in practice to be volunteers and elections are unnecessary. Foremen, engineers, electricians, etc. make up the committee to 12 members. Bonus payments are made up by the firm for the time lost by workers attending the committee meetings—an important point not always

recognised. In theory membership should completely change every two years but natural changes keep the committee from going stale and the rule is not applied. The committee meets monthly. An *ad hoc* meeting has never been called but this possibility is recognised, e.g. whenever an ambulance is called to the works, for whatever cause, the Works Manager, Personnel Manager and Safety Officer are advised. There is no evidence that safety matters requiring attention are held up for the next meeting. Committee members wear a distinctive badge so that anyone can approach them about safety. The Safety Officer is also quality control officer which means that he is often travelling about the works and readily accessible to his members. He makes a particular effort to greet his members on his way round so that he makes an opportunity for items to be raised.

3 Training

Training of committee members consists of visits to the Industrial Health and Safety Centre and occasional attendances at the local RoSPA Group.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

Communication is by means of circulated Minutes among senior staff and copies posted on the notice boards. There is no doubt that management take action on the Minutes, but it is very doubtful if anyone reads the copy on the board. Reliance is placed on word of mouth from committee members to the shop floor.

5 Functions of Safety Committee

There has never been any attempt to write formal terms of reference for the safety committee or to prescribe its scope and it is understood that this has not led to any difficulties. The firm is especially careful about machinery guarding, plant maintenance, etc. and the safety committee has rarely, if ever, raised guarding matters. Slippery floors and stairs, obstructed gangways and condition of ladders and steps figure often in the Minutes.

The safety committee has achieved three notable successes recently:

(1) A committee member had a narrow escape from being knocked down by a lorry within the factory roadway whilst on his way to a committee meeting. He raised the matter in uninhibited fashion and got immediate action. Within 24 hours a properly marked zebra crossing was completed by the painters and warning signs to indicate to drivers that they were entering a factory road were in place.

(2) The safety committee objected to the type of metal container being used for ingredients for pies and sausages. These were liable to topple over when stacked up. An investigation by the engineer revealed that these containers were stable when full but unstable when empty and stacked up. At considerable cost new satisfactory containers were obtained.

(3) The safety committee recorded that stillages were being stacked too high and were dangerous. The Factory Manager took the view that the safety committee should not be merely negative but should recommend standards. The safety committee took him seriously and produced a standard to cover every shape and size of stillage so far as stacking was concerned. The result looked rather like a British Standard but in addition the safety committee drew up a simple wall placard to be posted in places where stillages were used.

The safety committee investigates accidents from time to time but mostly relies upon the Safety Officer. Statistics of accidents are usually considered at six monthly intervals but unfortunately the pattern of falls and knife accidents continues. There are no self-inspection programmes or good housekeeping competitions.

6 Achievements of the Committee

There is no doubt that the safety committee is successful as some of the foregoing indicates. The accident frequency rate refuses to go below five but it is clear that the safety committee is successful in keeping it as low as that.

The management are keen on safety and anyone in a position of authority knows this. The directors are safety-conscious and this attitude goes down throughout the organisation.

The workers also are aware of this attitude and it is freely acknowledged by the shop stewards. Committee members were astounded when asked if they thought the safety committee effective as though the thought of failure should ever pass through anyone's mind.

Factory No. 15

1 Background of Firm

The firm operates a very large oil refinery with a labour force exceeding 2,000 and has been refining oil since the early 1950s. It is one of a group of refineries. The hazards of fire and explosion in an oil refinery are so serious that a very well-organised safety organisation has been set up and this covers safety of the individual as well as safety of the plant. Each refinery has its own committee and operates under the control of its own management. Advice is always available from the other refineries and from the group. The attitude of management in safety matters could not be bettered. There has been a steady reduction in the accident frequency rate since the refinery opened. The committee has been in existence since 1953.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The chairman of the committee is the Assistant Works Manager; the secretary is the Chief Safety Officer. The size of the committee is as follows:

Management side: Assistant Works Manager, Industrial Relations Officer, one of four Safety Officers, management representatives from operation section, engineers' section and technical services' section. The workers' representatives are all shop stewards, five in number, nominated by the shop stewards' committee plus a representative of the transport side and laboratory staff. The representatives are appointed by the shop stewards' committee. Foremen do not sit on the committee. The Safety Officer is secretary in the true sense and not merely in the sense of a Minute secretary and is principally responsible for producing the agenda and keeping the committee alive and active. The committee has power to co-opt any other member where necessary.

There are no set terms of office. Management representatives change as the individual personnel change, the workers' representatives change according to the wishes of the shop stewards' committee. The committee meets monthly, and is occasionally convened *ad hoc* to deal with special circumstances, but this is very rare.

3 Training

Special training is not given to committee members, but every worker employed by the refinery is given special training on first employment as a matter of great importance in the firm's policy.

4 Machinery for Communicating the Outcome of Meetings

180 copies of the Minutes of each meeting are distributed throughout the various departments of the refinery; each committee member receives his own and copies are posted on all works notice boards.

5 Functions of the Committee

There is no constitution and no special terms of reference. This is deliberate since in the opinion of management and the Safety Officer it allows greater flexibility of function. There is no special problem in this refinery other than the over-riding one of fire and explosion and as a result of this good house-keeping is the main subject on the agenda. There has been a considerable improvement in cleanliness and good housekeeping as a result of the safety committee's efforts. In the main, the committee does not investigate accidents but the Safety Officer can (and often does) bring into the investigation the workers' representative for a particular department. Statistical information is supplied regularly by computer analysis, and all committee members receive their personal copy of "Accidents", RoSPA bulletins and similar literature. The committee members do not take part in self inspection and could be said to be purely advisory so long as this is taken to include the advice of the committee members, workers' side, to shop floor workers as well as to management.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievement

Figures show an improvement in accident frequency rates since the refinery opened although the rate of reduction is now of course slowing down. Both management and workers were seen and it was evident that both thought the committee to be active and effective. This success is attributable to the attitude of management and the example set by management, the efficiency of the safety organisation under the Chief Safety Officer and the excellent relations which exist between management and workers in this factory.

Factory No. 16

1 Background of Firm

This firm occupy a large modern factory where some 2,000 persons are employed on day and night shift in the manufacture of precision electrical components, and comes under the control of a group of factories. A part-time Safety Officer is employed and the factory is also periodically inspected by the company's full-time Safety Officer.

The safety committee has been running for some 12 years and evidence of the effectiveness of the committee is shown in the small number of reportable accidents that occur each year at this factory (e.g. 1966-9).

2 Composition of the Safety Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The safety committee has 27 members as follows:

Shop Floor Representatives—14	Sister i/c Surgery
Apprentices—1	Manager of the Works

Junior Trainees—1	Engineer Department
Personnel Manager	Electrical Foreman
Safety Officer	Mechanical Foreman
Company Safety Officer	Methods Engineer
Factory Supervisor	Plant Layout Engineer
	Chief of Factory Fire Brigade

The committee sits once a month with the factory Safety Officer as the secretary and the Factory Supervisor as the chairman. It can, and has been called *ad hoc* in order to deal with an urgent safety matter. The 14 shop floor representatives together with the apprentice and junior trainee representatives, are voted on to the committee, a ballot being held annually. It is a works rule that the other members must attend.

3 Training

At least two members selected from the committee attend courses on safety each year. The apprentices and junior trainees receive lectures on safety as part of their training.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

After a committee meeting has been held, Minutes of the meeting are sent to all directors, the group headquarters and the Group Engineer who is in charge of safety. A copy of the Minutes is also sent to all foremen who affix it to the window of their office in order that any worker may read it. Another copy is affixed to the general notice board of the factory.

5 Functions of the Committee

Any factory accident no matter how trivial and all other safety, health and welfare matters are discussed at the meeting. If a remedy is necessary, the work is put in hand at once. At no time has there been a query from the board about expenditure on safety, health and welfare. Provision is made in the annual budget for a generous expenditure on health and safety. If this allocation is exhausted further expenditure has to be authorised by the Works Director who is however interested in danger prevention even down to details of aesthetics. A short while ago the committee received complaints from the workers about oil fumes being emitted from certain high speed metal machining lathes and the committee decided to go ahead and provided special exhaust ventilation. This entailed the fitting of large-diameter trunking which discharged out through the roof. The trunking when fitted spoilt the look and colour scheme of the factory. When the Managing Director was walking round the factory he gave instructions for it to be colour painted in order to tone with the other parts of the factory.

6 Comments on Committee's Achievements

One of the main factors which makes the committee so successful is the keenness of the shop floor representatives on the committee. These members are known to their fellow workers who often, during a normal working day, consult them on safe ways of working, etc. When H.M. Inspector of Factories visits this factory more often than not he is approached by a shop floor representative who asks advice on some safety or health problem.

Factory No. 17

1 Background of Firm

The factory, in which 168 people are employed, is owned by a group and is engaged in the manufacture of fine chemicals. A wide variety of highly flammable solutions and toxic chemicals are used.

The general policy for safety is laid down by the company. In its directive on accident prevention, it is stated that the responsibilities of management for accident prevention are based on principles of humanity and efficiency, viz., "management's duty is to make life in factories as healthy, safe, cheerful and interesting as possible. Accidents cost money and prevention saves inefficiency and waste".

Safety and fire precautions are controlled from the firm's headquarters with the company Safety Officer acting in an advisory capacity to management. At each factory there is someone appointed to be responsible for safety acting in liaison with headquarters. In the larger factories this is a full-time Safety Officer. In the smaller factories such as this one, this function is carried out by the Personnel Officer who has been trained in safety. Safety training is arranged by courses for senior management, middle management and supervisory management with induction courses for new entrant workers. After the induction course, subsequent safety training for workers is on-the-job instruction because the safety aspects of the work are so closely involved with production processes. Even for fully trained workers, all job cards carry the appropriate safety instructions, typed in red, specifying the hazard, the safety measures to be taken and the appropriate safety clothing to be worn. This is in addition to standing safety rules for work involving specific hazards, e.g. "cyanide safety rules".

The general policy of the company provides for joint consultation on accident prevention with the safety committees functioning sectionally, departmentally and for the whole works. The guiding principle is to seek as wide an involvement of management and workers in accident prevention as possible. Within this framework local managements are left a fair degree of freedom to choose the way in which they organise their safety committees to suit their conditions.

With regard to safety performance, the factory last year completed 1,000 days without a lost-time accident and by March of this year had completed just under 931,000 man-hours without a lost-time accident. They have set themselves a target of 1,000,000 man-hours. They find that this target is an important common incentive both for management and weekly paid staff which helps to maintain the dynamic force behind their accident prevention efforts, particularly at their present stage of accident prevention. The management at the factory admit that owing to the location of the factory, they have the advantage of a stable labour force. Further, the factory is not one which is struggling for financial survival and money is available for accident prevention measures. On the other hand, they do not spend money regardless of economy. They operate an annual safety budget. Safety is costed against factory services and is borne on the service department's account. Production department heads are not, therefore, tempted to pinch and scrape on safety to make a better financial showing in their departments. This also has the advantage that safety precautions are not an unknown percentage cost against the production, which would be the case if safety was costed against each individual production department. At the same time, to ensure prompt remedial action in the interests of safety, such as the provision of safeguards and the repair of guards, foremen can authorise expenditure up to £10 on their own responsibility. Departmental

heads can authorise expenditure up to £25 and the Factory Manager can authorise expenditure up to £1,000. (Increased three months ago and now standing at this figure.)

All grades of management have an interested and committed attitude to safety.

The factory has had a safety committee ever since 1952 when the factory opened. In 1957, however, the whole arrangement was changed and extended to meet changed conditions as outlined in the succeeding paragraphs.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

Up to 1957 there had been a safety committee in the factory providing for joint consultation on safety and the usual factory management committee meeting to consider production and operational matters and the general running of the factory. At this stage, the management decided that they had progressed beyond the pioneering stage in safety. Over the years, they had brought their environmental safety to a high standard and they considered that it was time that they moved into a second stage in which they would seek a wider involvement of all levels in the factory in accident prevention. Joint consultation in the original safety committee had been very successful and, again after consultation, it was agreed to widen the terms of reference of the new committee to include working efficiency which was often closely bound up with accident prevention.

The result of the reorganisation in the factory in 1957 was that the existing safety committee was replaced by:

(1) *A Central Committee*

Consisting of members of the factory management committee together with section heads.

(2) *Departmental Committees*

Made up of the section head, supervisory staff down to chargehands and representatives of the departments below the rank of chargehand.

The central committee is still advisory to management but it is through the deliberations of the central committee that senior management action is arrived at. The Factory Manager is chairman of the central committee and this committee goes over in detail the Minutes of each departmental committee so that everything discussed in the departmental committees comes to the Factory Manager's attention. In the functioning of the central committee, care is taken not to withdraw things from the departmental committees and from departmental level in order not to weaken the position of the departmental committees and departmental heads in running their departmental committees.

Departmental committees meet under the chairmanship of the section head and include supervisory staff down to chargehands and "representatives below the rank of chargehand". In order to bring about the complete involvement of everyone in accident prevention, the representatives of the rank and file are not elected but serve on a rota system which includes everybody, not excepting canteen workers, storemen, labourers and drivers. The number of rank and file members varies from department to department according to size and so does the period of rotation. Generally, every worker serves at least two months per year on the committee and in the smaller departments three or possibly four months. The ratio of management and worker representatives is normally 1:3. The committees meet monthly or more often if necessary.

3 Training

As "on-the-job safety" is constantly carried out and as all personnel take part in departmental discussions on safety, no extra safety training is given to committee members.

4 Machinery for Communicating the Outcome of Meetings

Minutes are made of the central committee meetings and these are displayed on all departmental notice boards, as are all departmental committee meetings Minutes, so that everyone in the factory knows what the central committee is doing. The departmental committee representative on the central committee provides a personal link between the two committees for reporting up and reporting back. Section representatives all brief their sections when a personal briefing has been decided upon in committee in addition to the publication of Minutes.

A copy of the central committee Minutes of each factory is sent to the company Safety Officer and also a copy of the central committee Minutes of each factory is circulated to every other factory in the company in order that each factory can pick out points of interest in other factories' Minutes applicable to their own works.

5 Functions of the Works Safety Committee

The terms of reference of the committees run:

"The functions of the two committees, which will work in close liaison will be as follows:

(a) The departmental committees will provide the opportunity for everyone in the factory to play a constructive part in accident prevention, and so through his chairman, to make known to the Factory Manager and to the central committee his views on the subject. The departmental committees will also consider all suggestions arising from the "Spot the Hazard" competition.

(b) The central committee will examine recommendations on all aspects of accident prevention made by the departmental committees and advise on management action.

The functions mentioned above are fundamental but these general headings contain wide scope for investigation and discussion. The "Spot the Hazard" competition mentioned above will be a permanent feature in the everyday life of the factory and the operation of the competition will be carried out, as stated, by the two committees."

The functions of the committees include:

(1) Consideration of new projects and information about such projects going down to shop floor level.

(2) General safety briefings following information from headquarters or senior management.

(3) As it is so long since the last time an accident occurred, incidents which might have led to lost-time accidents are discussed together with the preventive measures to be taken. Accidents from other factories' Minutes that could have occurred in their own factory are also considered.

(4) Infringement of safety discipline, such as the non-wearing of protective or safety clothing, are discussed and section representatives carry back the message to their sections to obviate the need to call the department together at a shop floor meeting to put the disciplinary reminder across.

(5) The core of the discussion, however, is consideration of safety items raised by the workpeople. This is done by means of the "Spot the Hazard" scheme. This is an incentive scheme and was introduced because the firm, having over the years taken their environmental safety to the point where readily recognisable dangers had been eliminated, needed an incentive to carry them through into what they call second stage safety and to maintain interest while developing a group attitude in the works to safety. This scheme, together with the stimulation of having the objective of a million man-hour target has, in fact, achieved this. The scheme is a monetary award scheme for spotting a hitherto unnoticed hazard, and apart from the incentive motive, the factory find that the scheme has two main advantages: it makes each worker carry out a personal "self-inspection programme" all the time and it prevents safety items being stored up for committee meetings. The rules of the scheme are such as to ensure that line management are promptly informed of hazards so that they can take remedial action. The point can then be discussed together with the remedial action in committee.

6 Comments on Committee's Achievements

The effectiveness of the joint efforts of management and workers in accident prevention is borne out by their safety record to date. Both management and workers have an earnest, in-built group attitude towards safety. The management say that the committees are still producing valuable information on hazards. The payments for the "Spot the Hazard" scheme were, 1964—£49; 1965—£66 and 1966—£29.

In a scheme of joint consultation in which all workers participate, clearly some will make a lesser contribution than others. As the firm has reached a stage where one might expect interest to begin to drop away, it was surprising to be told by a workers' representative that "it becomes more interesting as it goes on". Clearly, the factory seems to be achieving its object of involvement, with the result that the better informed their workers become about safety, the more interest they have in the discussions of the committee and the more informed contributions they can make to these discussions.

The main interest of this particular case study is that it illustrates the experience of a factory which having put its house in order with the usual type of works safety committee, is then faced with the problem "Where do we go from here?".

Factory No. 18

1 Background of Firm

This factory employs about 200 persons in the manufacture of joinery and polystyrene products for the building trade, including industrialised building units, and for commercial undertakings. It is in the process of expansion, while forming a unit within a group of companies, it is an autonomous body with its own directorate and management. For certain common services, including the Safety Officer, it shares with other firms nearby within the group. It has been in existence as a company for over 50 years and although never established as a family business, traces of paternal influences can be sensed; this may be due to the fact that many of the employees have qualified for long service awards and there is a family atmosphere generally. The firm's attitude towards safety, is that if injuries and accidents occur, production suffers. In general, the safety performance of the firm is at a high level.

There is no separate safety committee in the company, but safety is a standing item on the agenda of the joint consultative works committee. This committee has been in existence since long before the war; nobody in the factory can remember when the committee was first established. It was originally set up to explain bonus payment schemes to workers, and its scope was later extended to include safety, health and welfare.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

The committee is made up from six management representatives including the Works Director; these members cover every department within the factory and include the general services works foreman. There are nine worker representatives nominated from the shop floor. The works Convener of shop stewards, who is also the company's Safety and Training Officer, also sits on the committee. The committee is chaired by the company's Managing Director whose personal secretary also acts as secretary to the committee. There is no formally appointed vice-chairman but in the rare absence of the Managing Director, the Works Director takes over as chairman. Management representatives are not replaced at regular intervals but the nine worker representatives are elected annually; changes of membership do, in fact, take place. Normally the committee meets monthly. There is no evidence that safety matters requiring attention are held up for meetings.

3 Training

No specific safety training is given to committee members, but all newcomers to the company at works level undergo an induction course which includes safety.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

Following the meeting, management representatives are expected to take executive action on matters agreed by the committee. Both management and worker representatives of the committee receive a private copy of the Minutes and copies are posted on all notice boards in the factory.

5 Functions of the Works Committee

There are no formal terms of reference for the committee, but the regular agenda includes discussions under the following headings:

Production matters; safety; canteen; sick and welfare (including the monthly accidents and sickness report); training.

Discussions at the meetings seem to be at a high level: the subjects discussed are of wide interest. One particularly successful campaign by the Safety Officer regarding the sale of safety boots was formally acknowledged by the committee who persuaded the management to subsidise the sale of these.

The committee does not involve itself in the investigation of accidents, but each month statistical information of major and minor injuries is available together with sickness reports. From these the committee has from time to time noted the emergence of certain accidents in particular departments, and made recommendations to the management. The committee's functions are purely advisory, but the Safety Officer and departmental heads regularly carry out self inspection of departments.

6 Comments on the Committee's Achievements

The committee appears to be thoroughly effective and its success is attributed by the Convener of shop stewards to the active interest shown by management,

including the Chairman and Managing Director, on matters of safety, health and welfare, as well as production.

The Works Director expressed the opinion that the committee, through the workers' representatives, kept management on their toes on safety matters where management might otherwise concern itself only with production matters.

This committee operates in a favourable atmosphere and it was suggested that the atmosphere has partially been created by the committee itself where policy on all matters including training, safety, health and welfare is discussed. At the present time self inspection throughout the factory is being increased and it is hoped that the future activities of both the committee and the works will lead to improvements in safety, health and welfare.

Factory No. 19

1 Background of Firm

More than 1,000 workers are employed in the overhaul and repair of public service vehicles (the mechanical parts are overhauled elsewhere). Workshops here deal with the upholstery and fittings. The buildings are all less than 30 years old and are well laid out, with ample working space. There is a full-time Safety Officer at this depot who has been in the post for eight years, having adequate status and support from management. There is a production and safety committee with further communications upwards. The works has a full-time nurse and shares a full-time medical officer.

2 Composition of the Committee and Frequency of Meetings

A safety committee was instituted here when the works started some 20 years ago but it was transformed into a "Production and Safety Committee" in 1956.

The committee consists of the Works Manager (chairman), seven section engineers, the Safety Officer, a representative of the foremen's committee, and seven representatives from the various trade union sections appointed by the sections (the works is fully trade union organised). These are, in fact, generally shop stewards.

The committee meets monthly—the first part of the meeting is concerned, broadly, with production matters and then safety items follow, but many production and safety matters are inter-connected.

3 Training

The committee is taken to the Industrial Health and Safety Centre occasionally—the last time was two years ago.

Some literature is circulated—"Accidents" and RoSPA circulars mainly. A lecture was given to the committee recently on "Fire Precautions and Fire Fighting".

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meetings

The outcome of meetings reaches the shop floor through the Safety Officer and the shop stewards, and the publication of the Minutes on the works notice boards.

5 Functions of the Joint Consultative Committee as Regards Safety

The inclusion of items on safety arises mainly in three ways:

(I) Items are included which have been discussed in the first instance with the

departmental foreman and/or with the Safety Officer and only reach the safety committee if the employees' side of the committee feels that no satisfactory conclusion has been reached.

(2) Items raised by the managerial side in connection with changes in plant, layout or process or problems connected with new types of buses.

(3) General problems raised by management such as the incidence of eye or foot accidents or fire hazards.

Method of dealing with Agenda

If action has been agreed at the meeting, the item is progressed at the next meeting and remains on the agenda until the matter is finally resolved. If the matter is not agreed, it can be taken higher and ultimately, if necessary, to the highest management.

Normally, however, items raised do not reach the committee—perhaps three or four items a day may be settled on the spot by the Safety Officer and foreman concerned, and only perhaps two or three items in the month raised by the employees may be left unresolved for inclusion on the committee agenda.

6 Comments on Achievements

Without doubt, personal relations between the management, and particularly the Safety Officer, and the trade union officials, appear to be especially good. The trade union officials seem to be highly co-operative and have given valuable help in reducing eye injuries. (A works campaign has reduced minor eye injuries from an average of 24 per month to about six.) The efficiency of the safety organisation and the level-headedness and sense of responsibility of the trade union organisation makes the safety side of the committee's work far less active than it might otherwise be.

The question was, therefore, asked as to whether the committee was now really needed. The reply from the chairman of the shop stewards' committee was that it was "a comfort to the employees", and that because of the existence of the committee as a channel of communication, and a means of discussion, it was much easier to achieve a settlement of day-to-day safety matters at the shop floor level. It acted as a "Court of Appeal".

This is a factory with a good and effective safety organisation. The committee has a place in this organisation but it is a subsidiary one to a good management policy.

Factory No. 20

1 Background of Firm

This is one of a number of factories belonging to a public company. Here, about 1,700 people are employed in the manufacture of open-topped metal cans. Company policy is laid down in detail from Head Office and although each works enjoys some degree of autonomy, a fairly close control of the workings of each separate executive function is exercised by the appropriate central office department. Although each separate factory in the group has a Safety Officer directly responsible through the factory Personnel Officer to top management on site, there is a company Chief Safety Officer, working from Head Office who acts mainly as an adviser and co-ordinator. He visits the different factories from time to time and arranges regular conferences of all Safety Officers within the group. This means that the firm's safety policy is expressly written down and known to all Safety Officers and the safety organisa-

tion is consistent throughout the company. In this works, the safety function is vested in the personnel department. A full-time Safety Officer is employed who is directly responsible to the Personnel Officer and works in close contact with him, although having pretty full freedom of action in his own sphere.

The firm have a long and successful history of joint consultation. The factory has a long-established works council consisting of management representatives and workers' representatives elected annually by their own department. In the larger factories such as this one, the works council had a number of sub-committees of joint management and works representatives, e.g. canteen committee, social committee, which met regularly and reported back to the works council.

This system has worked well for many years. About last October, the company issued a new directive concerning the joint consultation machinery in the individual factories, which has to some extent altered the pattern of consultation. The main works council remains unchanged, but the former sub-committees, which in this factory included an accident prevention committee have been replaced by a set of departmental committees. One has been formed for each major department in the factory and in each case, one item which always appears on the agenda is departmental safety.

This high level decision was made in the interests of efficiency to economise and use more effectively the time spent by members on committee work by ensuring that they would attend committees to discuss only matters which were of direct concern and interest to them, "and so play a greater part in industrial relations and communications on site in the informal atmosphere of a small departmental committee". It is part of the firm's attempt to put into operation current Government policy on productivity and industrial efficiency and is seen as a streamlining of the joint consultation machinery. It would certainly seem to indicate continuing high-level interest in the operation of the joint consultation machinery throughout the organisation.

It is company policy that high regard shall be paid to safety throughout the organisation. Top management in this factory pay more than mere lip service to this; the Safety Officer gets full co-operation from all levels of management and the firm's general standards of safety and housekeeping are high.

2 Composition of Committee and Frequency of Meetings

There are 12 separate departmental committees, which vary considerably in size according to the size of the department. The number of management representatives always includes the secretary who is *ex officio*, a member of the personnel department. The departmental workers' representation in every case forms the majority of the committee. In all cases except the canteen and accounts, the management representatives include at least one foreman. The workers' representatives are elected by their department members and generally, though not in every case, include the department shop stewards. The head of the department is the chairman.

The Safety Officer is not a member of the committees, but can be co-opted on to any of them in an advisory capacity. Although he receives copies of the Minutes and works in close co-operation with all the committee chairmen, he feels that from his personal point of view the new system has disadvantages when compared with the old accident prevention committee meetings. He is not generally present at the meeting and thus does not know exactly what has been said at any meeting during discussions on safety matters. It means too, that

where he used to have one set of Minutes, mostly of direct concern to him, he now has 12 to work through, only parts of which involve safety matters.

Elections of workers' representatives will be held every two years and management representatives re-appointed. In many cases it is unlikely that there will be any changes in management members. Certain managers are *ex officio* members.

Each committee meets monthly. In addition, three times a year, there is a main committee meeting of the chairmen and one elected member of all the departmental committees plus the Personnel Officer and the Safety Officer, chaired by the General Manager. Only one such meeting has so far been held to explain the new system to members. This has replaced the old works committee and is seen as a co-ordinating committee to ensure that all committees are working along the same lines, and as an opportunity for the different committees to share each other's problems, hear of each other's difficulties and how they have been resolved and exchange information on matters of general interest.

There is provision in their constitutions for the committees to be convened *ad hoc* to deal with special circumstances although so far this has not been done. Safety matters requiring attention are not held up for meetings. There appears to be very good day-to-day communication in the factory, mainly through the trade union organisation.

3 Training

No special training is at present given to committee members, although the firm consider that part of the function of the joint consultation machinery and of committee service is to train all concerned to play their full part in the healthy running of the factory.

4 Machinery for Communicating Outcome of Meeting

Copies of the Minutes are distributed to all committee members, and members report a good deal of interest from department personnel. Copies are also posted on all the works notice boards and because the firm employ a fair proportion of immigrant labour, copies translated into Italian and Pakistani are posted on all the notice boards.

5 Functions of the Committee

Both workers and management representatives thought that the new committees had not been working long enough for there to have been any outstanding achievements as yet. However, a number of workers' representatives said that the new committees had already, in a number of cases, achieved satisfactory action in respect of many comparatively minor items relating to a particular department which had previously been "glossed over" on the large committee and had not received the attention they merited. One such item quoted was improved ventilation in a toolroom. Management representatives said they thought the changeover in organisation with the consequent publicity and direct involvement of top management in starting up the new committees, had stimulated interest throughout the works which they regarded as noteworthy in itself. A marked improvement in communications has resulted throughout the factory.

Everyone was firmly of the opinion that the subject matter showed no signs of degenerating into trivia and they thought it was unlikely to do so. More items of purely departmental concern will obviously be raised, but it would be

unfair to regard such items as trivia. The Personnel Officer remarked that the meetings were well-controlled with good experienced chairmen and so the discussions were kept on the right lines.

The committees do not themselves investigate accidents, though accidents occurring in a particular department are discussed at that department's committee. The Safety Officer said he considered that many accidents had a relevance and value for departments other than that in which they occurred and he thought one weakness of the new system could be a lack of interchange of detailed information of this kind. He did not think the main committee meetings could provide a complete solution to this problem.

At each committee meeting statistical information on all accidents in the department is supplied by the medical department and members study this to assist in identifying and eliminating hazards.

Committee members do not have an executive function in the works as committee members. They are regarded as an advisory body and do not carry out any self inspection programmes.

6 Comments on Committees' Achievements

It is early yet to show much tangible evidence of the achievements of these committees other than the lively interest displayed by all involved. Time and again, workers' representatives said that the new departmental committees were much better than the old committees, each of which covered the affairs of the whole factory, because they felt that the affairs of their own department were now receiving proper importance and attention. They said that formerly, in discussion, members showed an inability to appreciate the viewpoint and needs of departments other than their own and that now, problems requiring management action received much quicker attention. It would seem that on a fairly large site such as this one, there is a need for the "parish meeting" type of committee if everyone is to feel that his needs are receiving proper consideration.

Management representatives, whilst showing a good deal of sympathy for the workers' point of view, were less sure that as an overall long-term policy, the new structure had all the advantages vis-a-vis safety which the workers seemed to think. The Safety Officer thought that a separate accident prevention committee discussing safety in relation to the whole factory could develop so as to serve a much wider educative purpose than the departmental committees could hope to achieve. One or two people commented that although it was now easier to get matters attended to within a department, safety items which concerned parts of the factory used in common by all departments (such as roads and car parks) were now more difficult to bring to the notice of management. People felt it was not appropriate to bring them up on their own departmental committees and even if they did, departmental management present at the meeting could do nothing to solve the problem except refer the matter to higher authority for consideration.

Apart from the reservations expressed in the foregoing, the committees seem to be very successful in assisting to maintain the firm's high standards of safety and welfare and in facilitating communication and mutual understanding in the factory. As yet they do not seem to be fully used as training grounds in understanding the problems and responsibilities involved in works safety, for example, no committees have yet contemplated carrying out departmental inspections and reporting on their findings. The Personnel Officer says he is at present giving thought to this and hopes to introduce some such ideas gradually.

The committees are all enjoying full management support and special efforts

are made by management to implement committee recommendations, as it is appreciated that this is necessary to maintain interest and avoid feelings of frustration. Management find that the committees make a useful contribution to their own knowledge of needs and conditions within the department. Members and other workers all show great interest in the committees' doings; members enjoy their service and there is no shortage of workers willing to serve. The trade unions give the committees their full support and the committees' deliberations are free from any atmosphere of suspicion. Both sides seem quite willing to exchange information likely to be of use to the committees on all subjects, including safety.

One problem only has been encountered arising from language difficulties. The company has a large number of Pakistani and Italian workers. There are no Pakistani workers' representatives and very few Italian ones. When the committees were first formed there were some Italian members amongst the representatives but practically all of them have now asked to be allowed to withdraw as they found that their English was not good enough to enable them to follow the discussions properly. As previously stated, the Minutes of the meetings are translated into Italian and Pakistani and posted on the works notice boards and the firm hold periodic English language classes for their foreign workers. The Personnel Officer and his assistant realise the difficulties which these workers encounter and do all they can to communicate with them by interpreters and translations of works notices so as to draw them fully into the life of the factory and it is difficult to see what further help they can give.

On the whole the committees here are working well in the safety field. Although they deal with other subjects as well as safety, they are playing a valuable part in the firm's general safety organisation.

The interviewer agreed with the Safety Officer that a separate accident prevention committee covering the whole factory could play a valuable part in furthering the safety education of both workers and management alike and that there is room for development in the safety function of these committees, particularly in the field of safety training and self inspection. Having high standards and rejoicing in a good long-established company policy which appears to work well, this firm is perhaps just a shade complacent, but there is sufficient real interest in the safety and welfare of the workpeople and sufficient "divine discontent" amongst the management to ensure continued development of the committees' work within the framework of the organisation.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Works Safety Committees in Practice

— some case studies

*Interim report of the Industrial Safety Advisory Council's
sub-committee for joint consultation on safety.*



LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
1968

Foreword

by the Rt. Hon. Ray Gunter, M.P., Minister of Labour

Last year I set up an Industrial Safety Advisory Council to advise me on questions relating to safety at work. A Sub-Committee of this Council was established to keep the subject of joint consultation on safety matters under regular review. The Sub-Committee, which includes representatives of the Confederation of British Industry, the Nationalised Industries and the Trades Union Congress, takes the view that it would be a real encouragement to the further development of joint consultation on safety if information about a number of committees which have worked effectively in this field could be made generally available. This booklet sets out to provide this information.

I attach particular importance to joint consultation on safety because it operates in the factory where accidents actually happen, and because accident prevention essentially demands a co-operative effort. I am, therefore, very pleased to commend the Sub-Committee's booklet to managements and others concerned. I hope it will be widely studied.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Gunter".

Introduction

Increasing interest is being shown in the question of joint consultation on safety matters. A considerable amount of experience of its working has now been gained and the time seems appropriate to make this information more widely available. This is the purpose of this booklet.

The information on which the booklet is based was obtained from a study of joint safety committees and joint consultative committees having safety as one of their subjects which was recently carried out by H.M. Factory Inspectorate. A total of 260 cases was examined and details of 20 of these are contained in this booklet. They have been chosen because they bring out points which might help any firm which is considering setting up a committee or wondering how to make an existing committee more effective. This does not of course mean that the Sub-Committee endorses all the procedures of particular committees. It is hoped at a later date to supplement the case studies by some more general guidance.

Objectives

The general objective must be to help in making the workplace safer. This is an aim which can be expressed in different ways but it is succinctly set out in the following remarks drawn from interviews with management:

"The basic aim of management has been to cultivate employees' responsibility and interest in matters of safety without abdicating the responsibility that must rest with the management".

"The guiding principle is to seek as wide an involvement of management and workers in accident prevention as possible".

A safety committee is not a substitute for but a part of the safety organisation in a factory. It cannot relieve higher management of its overriding responsibility for accident prevention.

Effectiveness

It is often difficult to establish a direct link between the setting up of a committee and a reduction in the number of accidents because of the problem of isolating this one factor from all the others which have a bearing on the level of accidents. There are, however, instances amongst the case studies quoted where a direct contribution to a reduction in the number of accidents is claimed, whilst in many instances the indirect effect of increased safety consciousness is stressed. In all the cases quoted those concerned—both management and men—agreed that the committee was effective and this view was shared by the Factory Inspectors who studied them.

Organisation

There is no one set pattern. The usual arrangement is to have one safety committee for each factory. In large works, however, much of the business to be considered may appear remote to individual members and it is sometimes found better to have departmental safety committees or to include safety in the business of departmental joint consultative committees dealing with other subjects as well. Small factories sometimes have the problem of finding enough business to keep up interest after the early meetings and some, therefore, include safety within the scope of an existing joint consultative committee rather than maintain a separate works' safety committee.

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Composition

No hard and fast rules can be laid down but the case studies clearly indicate the advantages of having a chairman drawn from senior management. They also suggest the desirability of a satisfactory balance between management and workers' representatives on committees. The precise representation and the extent to which trade unions are directly involved vary with circumstances. It is to be expected that line management will be represented. The important role of the safety officer is clearly brought out. Workers' representatives are usually elected. Selection by rota is sometimes practised as giving the maximum number the opportunity to gain experience in accident prevention.

Special provision may be necessary if night shifts are worked or if there are appreciable numbers of workers from overseas.

Procedure

Normal committee procedure is followed in most cases. There are informal committees which seem to work well, usually in small firms, but in other cases the lack of any formal framework may be a weakness.

Functions

In the great majority of cases these are purely advisory. In addition to the usual committee business, self-inspection programmes or safety tours by committee members, often in association with others, are quite common. Members also sometimes take an active part in such matters as safety incentive schemes, competitions or poster campaigns. They are sometimes expected to advise other workers as well as management.

The subjects discussed by different committees will naturally vary according to circumstances. In addition to accidents and incidents which might have caused accidents, subjects most commonly considered include safety of plant and machinery, gangways and condition of floors, maintenance of ladders, good industrial housekeeping, methods of handling, safety training, fire precautions and protective clothing and footwear.

Communications

Most factories in the case studies appear to rely on circulating the committee minutes or posting them on notice boards. It is clear that this is not regarded as sufficient.

Training

The safety education of committee members beyond what is necessary for their individual jobs is the exception though some firms have embarked on training programmes which include lectures, films, visits to the Ministry of Labour Industrial Health and Safety Centre, or even residential courses.

General

The case studies relate to effective committees but some reference must be made to difficulties which can render a committee wholly or partly ineffective. There is the general difficulty that if management/worker relations are unsatisfactory in a particular factory a safety committee has little chance of thriving. But there are other more specific dangers—apathy, poor communications, dissatisfaction with the balance of representation or disagreement about the information to be provided. As the case studies show, these difficulties are by

no means universal and where they do arise can be overcome given the right approach. Members must feel that they are doing a worthwhile job and that proper notice is taken of what they say. This calls for continuing interest on the part of higher management and a willingness to deal with committees' recommendations without delay and to keep them informed of decisions. Whilst, therefore, a committee cannot work properly if employees and their unions do not give it full support, the attitude of higher management is absolutely crucial to success.